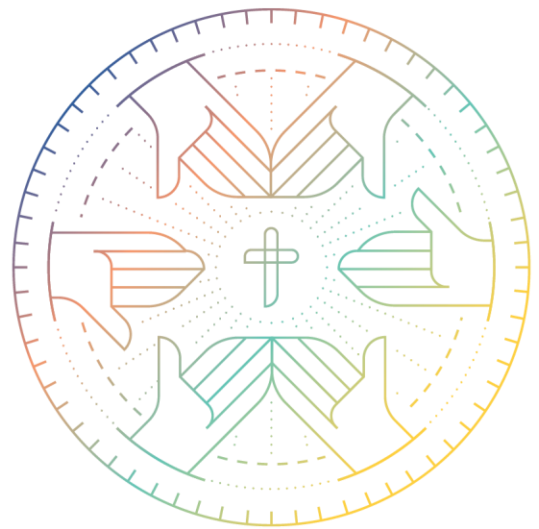


Group Life.

WE ARE BETTER TOGETHER



MEETING AGENDA

WELCOME (10 MINUTES)

We are excited to dive into the second half of Ephesians. This week's discussion will go into spiritual gifts. If you or your group would like to learn more about spiritual gifts and take a Spiritual Gifts survey to better understand your gifting, we have attached a resource to the leader email that you can use.

Additionally, don't forget to pick up the part 2 Ephesians devotionals and pass them out to your group.

Lastly, don't forget to take attendance via the attendance reminder email.

ICEBREAKER (10 MINUTES)

What's an unusual skill you have and where did you learn it?

INTRODUCTION (5-10 MINUTES)

In the first half of Ephesians Paul focuses on doctrine. The second, half of his letter helps us understand how to apply it to our lives. Paul begins chapter 4 with a call for unity in the body of Christ and to walk in our giftings so that the Church may grow in maturity and love.

INTO THE WORD (25 MINUTES)

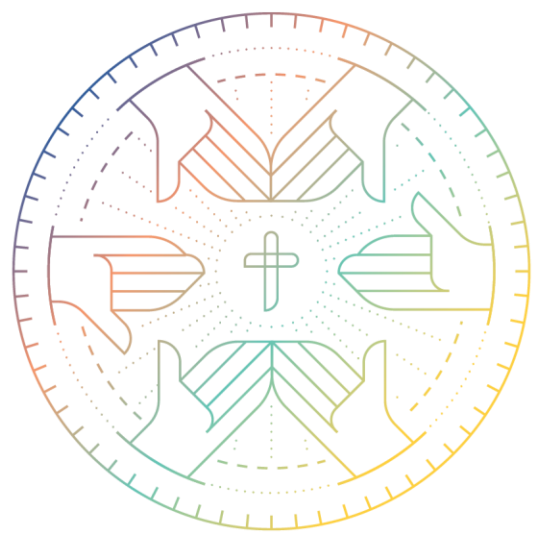
1. **Read Ephesians 4:1-3. Paul instructs the Ephesians to live a life worthy of their calling and then lists characteristics associated with that calling. They are:**

- **Humility**
- **Gentleness**
- **Patience**
- **Bearing with one another in love**
- **Eager to maintain the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace**

Of those listed, which one sticks out to you? Have you witnessed someone you know that displays one or all of the characteristics?

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H.O.S.T. GUIDANCE

[Answers will vary. The characteristics listed are humility, gentleness, patience, bearing with one another in love, and eagerness to maintain the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace. Humility is not thinking less of yourself, it's thinking of yourself less. - C.S. Lewis. Gentleness allows us to interact with others in ways that are less harsh, more caring, considerate, and tender in our actions and words. Patience: "But I received mercy for this reason, that in me, as the foremost, Jesus Christ might display his perfect patience as an example to those who were to believe in him for eternal life." 1 Timothy 1:16 Bearing with one another in love: "Greater love has no one than this, that someone lay down his life for his friends." John 15:13 Eager to maintain the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace: "Complete my joy by being of the same mind, having the same love, being in full accord and of one mind." Philippians 2:2

- 2. Read Ephesians 4:7-12 and Romans 12:3-8. According to these passages, what do you see as the importance of Spiritual Gifts?**

H.O.S.T. GUIDANCE

[You or your group may not be familiar with spiritual gifts. They are God-given abilities that enable us to love, build, and grow the Kingdom of God here on earth. Every believer has received a gift from God. These gifts are different than talents in that Spiritual gifts are received, are given at the time of salvation, and are used to build up the church. In contrast, talents are strengths that come naturally to us. If you are unaware of what your gifts are you will become aware of them as you grow in your faith and service to Him. 1 Peter 4:10 states, "Just as each one has received a gift, use it to serve one another as good stewards of the varied grace of God." Though spiritual gift surveys are not perfect indicators of how you have been gifted by God they can be useful in understanding areas of strength that can better help you understand your gifting.]

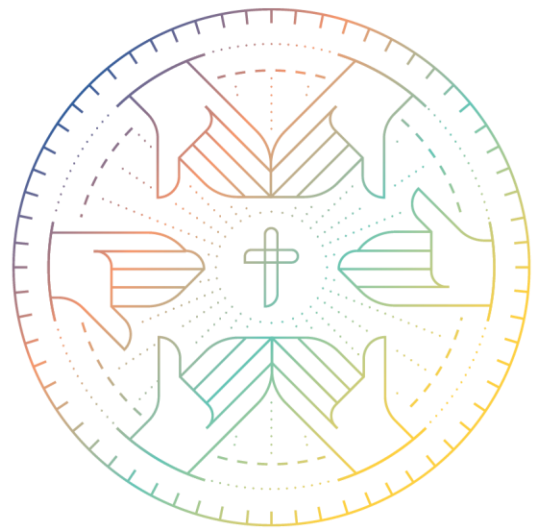
- 3. Read Ephesians 4:11-14 and Romans 16:17-18. According to this passage, why is it important to build unity in the church and use the spiritual gifts that we have been given by God?**

H.O.S.T. GUIDANCE

[Answers will vary. Some people are endowed with gifts of teaching, preaching, and so forth. It is crucial to the health of Christian congregations that these members use their God-given talents appropriately. At the same time, different members of a church have different abilities. The community of believers functions best when all of those individual pieces are working together, through their unique roles.]

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APPLICATION (25 MINUTES)

1. **Read Ephesians 4:4-6** Here, Paul stresses the importance of unity within the local church. **What message does a fragmented church send to a skeptical world? What would it look like to be a source of unity for the local church?**

H.O.S.T. GUIDANCE

[Answers will vary. Unity in the church is about coming together to form something bigger. It's recognizing that we're stronger together than we are individually. It's enjoying fellowship with each other. Unity in the church doesn't necessarily happen automatically. As with any relationship, we have to work continually at building and maintaining this unity. Our common identity is in Christ as described in Galatians 3:28. "There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither slave nor free, there is no male and female, for you are all one in Christ Jesus."]

2. **Take a few moments to discuss the spiritual gifts listed in the resource attached to the leader email.**

H.O.S.T. GUIDANCE

[Spiritual Gifts are found in Romans 12:6-8, 1 Corinthians 12:4-11, and Ephesians 4:11. They are administration, apostleship, discernment, encouragement, exhortation, evangelism, faith, giving, healing, hospitality, knowledge, leadership, mercy, miracles, pastoring, teaching, serving, and wisdom. Focus the conversation on helping your group to understand the gifts. For those who know their gifts encourage them to share how they practically put them into practice.]

3. **Read Ephesians 4:15-16 and 1 Corinthians 13:1-3. Paul speaks to the importance of love as we mature and use our giftings. Based on these passages what makes the presence of love so vital for the unity of the church?**

H.O.S.T. GUIDANCE

[Answers will vary. Biblical church growth results from every member of the body fully using their spiritual gifts, in submission to the Holy Spirit, and in collaboration with other believers. Love is the foundation that helps us walk in our calling as suggested in Ephesians 4:1-3. We will display humility, gentleness, patience, and unity when love is a part of all that we do. John 13:35 states, "By this, all people will know that you are my disciples if you have love for one another."]

PRAYER (10 MINUTES)

Dear heavenly Father, help us to walk in a manner worthy of our calling. Help us to walk in humility, gentleness, patience, and unity. May we seek to build up the church as we work to attain the unity of the faith and the knowledge of the Son of God to the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ. Help us to be grounded in you growing into maturity that we might not be carried about by every wind of doctrine but instead help us to speak the truth in love. We acknowledge that you are the head of the church and in you, we are joined together. Help us to understand how you have gifted us so that we may be equipped to build each other up in love. In your wonderful and precious name, we pray. Amen.